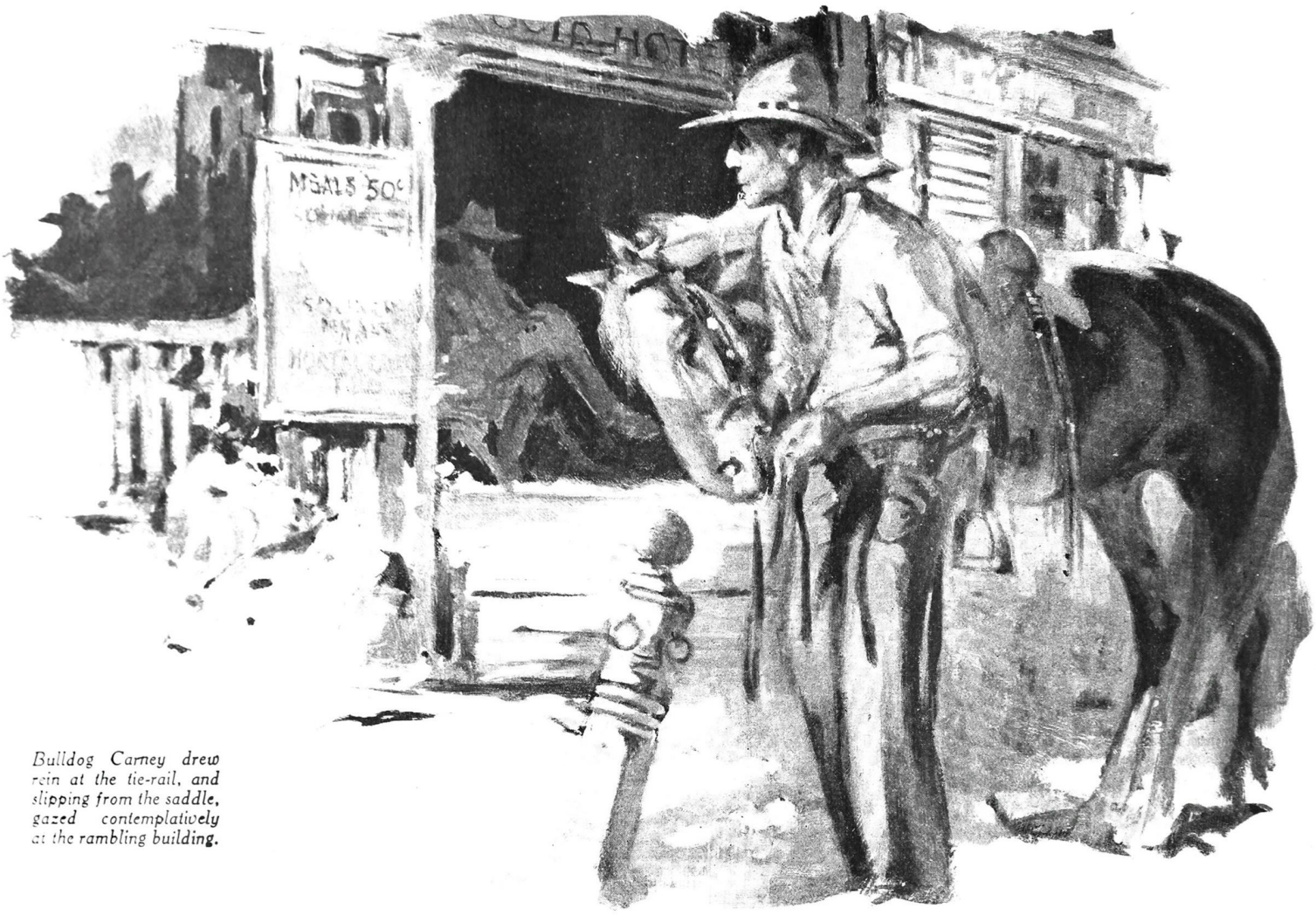


Bulldog Carney drew rein at the tie-rail, and slipping from the saddle, gazed contemplatively at the rambling building.

Bulldog Carney's Remuda

Double-crossing sometimes works, but triple-crossing rarely is successful

By W. A. FRASER

Illustrated by G. H. CHARLES

BULLDOG CARNEY did not know this ford on the Kootenay River, so he let wise old Pat have the rein. The buckskin, nose close to the turbulent water, had twisted up stream in a sinuous curve guided almost by the sensitive reading of his hoofs. But now, a hundred yards short of the farther shore, his belly was awash, and he stopped, half turning his lean beautiful head, asking advice.

"Fancy we've got to swim it, boy," Bulldog said.

He slipped from his neck a large red handkerchief, and put it in his Stet hat that was anchored to the back of his head by a leather thong; then slipping from the saddle on the down-stream side of the horse, retaining in his grasp a stirrup, he said; "Now, mush me, boy."

The buckskin lunged ahead into the deeper water, swimming with the facility of a retriever, Carney's body swinging out at an angle clear of the horse, like the wing of a bird. Gradually they were swept down stream, but Carney's body, always clear, interfered little with the gallant buckskin's swim.

As the iron-shod hoofs clangored up a stony point the buckskin was snorting with relief. Carney laughed, and with his quirt scraped the water from the loins and rump of the horse. He drew off his boots and poured out their holding of water. Next he slipped off his khaki coat and twisted it into a rope that trickled a stream to the stones. Then he took from his hat the handkerchief and dried his gun carefully saying! "Pat, keep your powder dry and your eyes skinned. I'll walk a bit and dry out."

Now the old Cranbrook Trail swung off to the right, miles away from Fort Steele, and Carney followed it. Once he looked westward in the direction of the police post, and chuckled, then he voiced the thought that was humorous: "We'll have the laugh on Major Steele, Pat, if we can rope Snaky Dick and turn him in."

That was the reason for taking this difficult ford—the capture of Snaky Dick. Carney could have crossed the Kootenay a mile higher up by the old ferry, a scow that tangented its way across, propelled by the rapid waters that pushed at its inclined side, but this craft was captained by a man, and he would surely tell that Bulldog had passed. And again, higher up, the trail swung from the west bank of the river to the east bank over a perfectly good bridge, but at the eastern end was Fort Steele, a Royal North-West Mounted Police post. Bulldog wanted no truck with the Mounted until he could bring in Snaky Dick.

Carney was always the Mounted Police's one best bet when an unusual piece of roadwork was pulled off single-handed; they changed the French saying of 'find the woman' into 'get Bulldog'. And now word had been passed that Carney had held up and robbed the train at Colville, across the line in Washington. But Carney knew that Snaky Dick, who ramified from Walla-Walla, was the bandit. It was a joyous endeavor to Bulldog for he would clear his own name, and, in addition, come by $5000 the reward offered for the train robber alive, near alive, or dead. Carney had a conviction that he could produce the exhibit if Snaky Dick were now up with his old time partner in crime, John of Slocan, at Wild Horse mining camp.

About ten o'clock Carney passed an almost obliterated roadway that forked from his trail. Trees lay across its surface, crashed down by fragments of rock from 'The Steeples', a hoary-headed giant that towered eight thousand feet above. Some flitting thought passed through his mind that it meant that, higher up, were worked-out placer claims, that was all; though later it meant something.

Several times Carney dismounted where the path led over impressionable soil, and examined it carefully for footprints of man or beast.

It was noon when Bulldog rode leisurely into Wild Horse, up a street garnished at intervals by log shacks. He drew rein at a tie-rail, and slipping from the saddle gazed contemplatively at the rambling building against which was nailed a board carrying the legend: 'Free Gold Hotel'.

A dry smile sunned his lean face as he read just below this flattering announcement:—

Meals	50 cents
Square Meal	$1.00
Mortal Gorge	$1.50

"The angular humor of John of Slocan!" Bulldog muttered; "the only virtue that cuss is possessed of."

Then his eyes narrowed as he stepped to the verandah, for sitting in a chair was Snaky Dick.

A paralyzing chill crept into the heart of the evil-faced sitter, and he cursed under his breath, for down at Walla-Walla this same lithe, lean, powerful chap, who now stood ten feet away, had put him and his fellow crooks all to the bad, trimming them to a standstill with his buckskin when they tried to put one over on Walla-Walla with Clatawa, the wild stallion, in a race.

A fatuous hope was in Snaky's mind that Bulldog might not remember him. 'But Man fleeth when no man pursueth', and Snaky was possessed of a dread that Carney knew of his participation in the train robbery, and was after him for the reward. He knew that Carney had captured the train robber at Bucking Horse, taken the loot

from him, hid it in an old mine, and turned it in to the police when a reward was offered.

The ethics of Bulldog permitted an endeavor such as this. He was to be more dreaded than any Red Coat; he couldn't be outwitted.

Then it came to Snaky clear and decisive, that Carney would know him; he was that kind, clear-headed as a bell; and if Snaky pretended not to recognize Carney it would be a sign that he was afraid, was hiding out.

But Bulldog gave no sign of recognition; oddly, or reasonably, he had the same problem—would Snaky remember him. He would wait and put the first move up to the other man.

With his thumbs stuck in the waistband of his breeches, a hand just inches away from a gun, he was stepping toward the door when, in its aperture loomed the big form of John of Slocan.

What John saw, marring the sunlit vista, suddenly slacked his nerves, A big cigar fell from his lips, and as he bent to retrieve it he cursed despondently; but straightening up he took a pull at himself and bluffed: "Hello, Bulldog!"

He stepped forward, ready, if the social barometer rose, to offer a hand in greeting but something in the gray eyes of Bulldog held this effusiveness in abeyance.

"I didn't know you were here, Slocan," Carney said in diplomacy.

The skeleton of a smile twisted John's wide mouth; "I'm glad of that, Bulldog," he declared.

"No, I'm not trailing anybody," Carney declared.

Snaky Dick, encouraged by this, untangled his skinny legs, and letting the chair bang forward, said:

"Mr. Carney, you run a royal flush on us down at Walla-Walla, an', as you got the pot graceful, no shootin', there's no come-back, eh?"

"When I win I don't shout; and when I lose I don't squeal," Carney answered.

"'Ceptin' that this mountain air parches a man's gizzard," Slocan declared. "The Free Gold knows how to treat a honored guest. There's a little sluice in the bar, we'll turn the flow on."

Slocan put a hand on the end of the bar, and with a half turn of his big body stood behind. He lifted a black bottle from a shelf, and, with the smooth facility of a card dealer, slid along the polished cedar board short, heavy-bottomed glasses, his black wolfish eyes, lifting with furtive shoots to Carney's face as if he were searching for some hidden thing.

But Carney, the thick glass still unemptied in his hand, was gazing meditatively around the inner walls that were plastered with inscriptions of food prices and holy writ:

Pie 25cts

and abutting this announcement one reading,

"In God We Trust."

On the opposite wall 'Flapjacks and coffee' announced that they could be purchased for 'two bits'; and below was a motto:

"Walk in love."

Slocan waved a long, gaunt arm in a comprehensive sweep, explaining: "When this camp was a humdinger, old Pete Blackstock run this joint. He was bughouse on stakin' a claim in heaven, an' he put 'em up; when I come in an' was doin' the interior decoratin', I said 'let 'em ride'."

"Walk in love should be on the outside," Carney suggested. "I'll show you." He pencilled a comma between 'Walk in,' and 'Love'.

"I get you," and Slocan forced a doleful laugh. "If I'd knew afore I come that Wild Horse was a China bazaar I'd never 've come," he added, meditatively. "A minin' camp is like a race horse, it can't stage a comeback Bulldog, 'special with Chinks. But I've got mine—I'm throwin' in the sponge—pullin' out. I've held my own here; I come in with nothin' an' I'm goin' out with nothing'."

"Quitting the hotel?" Carney queried.

"Yep! Master owns this palace, an' the pay roll I was on was fifty-fifty the profits; but there ain't no profits. His Chink pard, Hi Lo, is goin' to run this joint for him from this date forrard."

"How is Master in with a Chinaman?" Carney asked.

"In the fust place the cricks that empties into the Blue River was just alive with placer gold that got washed down from Mount Fisher and The Steeples. It was Yeller-dog Steve found it, an' the whites come swarmin' in like jack-rabbits chasin' afore a fire. 'Em gray-headed ol' mountains must 've laughed when they see the fellers diggin' an' washin' at their toes, an' drinkin' an' fightin' an' gettin' rich. Wisht I'd had this joint then. But there comes a time when the placer gets clost to the bone—purty lean; the fellers commenced to dribble out, an' Bob Master, who had a ranch over on the St. Mary's River, kept buyin' up their stake claims cheap. It was Bob herded the Chinks in here to work the claim on shares, an' made fan-tan the national game. The wheel over there is rusted up, 'cause there ain't no play; Chinks 's no better 'n trade rats."

At that the broad, squat figure of a Chinaman came bustling through the door, in his hand a canvas bag. With an effort he swung it to the bar, asking: "John, Mlaster he come yet?"

"No," Slocan answered.

"Velly well, John. You put this in iron box same as allee time; Mlaster come by-'m—bye."

Slocan drew a key from his pocket, opened a small, square iron box at the far end, shoved the bag in, and relocked the door.

The Chinaman discovered Carney. "Hello, Blulldog!"

"Hello, Hi Lo. Catchee gold?" and Carney grasped the Chinaman's pudgy hand.

"Going catchee dlink first, Blulldog. John, shove up plenty glass—all catchee dlink. Blulldog, you see that bag of gold?"

"Yes, nice and fat, Hi Lo."

"Well, plenty work and split plofit. I workee claim for Mlister Mlaster; that bag the clean-up for one mont'. Mlaster come to-day, takee bag out, send to smelter, smelter leturns say how muchee gold, now muchee per cent. slilver or clopper and quartz; then Master put in bank florty per cent. him sixty per cent. Hi Lo, and poor Hi Lo pay all Chinamans."

Slocan put his elbows on the cedar board and said, "Hi Lo ain't got nothin' to show for how much gold in that bag, four thousan' or six, 'cept Master's word."

"Plenty good, John," and the Chinaman laughed; "'cause Mlaster only got Hi Lo's word he don't cache plenty gold he not put in bag."

"That's right," Slocan declared, addressing Bulldog. "I'd rather take Hi Lo's word for a thousand than most white men's for two bits."

"Blulldog, why you come Wild Horse?" Hi Lo queried. There was a quizzical grin, a friendly insinuation in it, on the Chinaman's wide lips.

Slocan and Snaky Dick rivetted their eyes on Carney's face, for this was the query that was uppermost in their minds. They knew that the Chinaman was wondering if Bulldog now rode before the wind, a cloud hovering behind him.

"Catchee gold, Hi Lo. I got some claims up near Columbia Lake."

The Chinaman laughed. "That dlamn funny!" he exploded, "Blulldog Carney playin sucker-fish!"

"They didn't cost much, Hi Lo. There was a little game of poker down at—"

"That bletter," Hi Lo interrupted; "what you do, Blulldog—pan, you'self?"

"No—just make a look-see."

Much conversation had been telegraphed from eye to eye on the part of Slocan and Snaky Dick during this talk, and Snaky Dick's face had lost some of its gray pallor.

The crunch of hoofs outside, the tinkle of a snaffle-bit, and the men at the bar turned their eyes toward the door, as Hi Lo said cheerfully: "Here Mlaster now."

A tall, spare, powerful man came in; a striking-appearing man: sombre-faced—a Celt's face, thick grizzled hair atop a grizzled mustache and whisker.

"This Blulldog Carney, Mlister Mlaster, "Hi Lo said; "good mans."

The grizzled one nodded, "Glad to meet up, Mr. Carney," he said. "From what the fellers tells me Hi Lo is speakin' the truth."

"Your gold in John's box same allee time, Mlister Mlaster," Hi Lo advised.

Mechanically Slocan slid another glass along the bar.

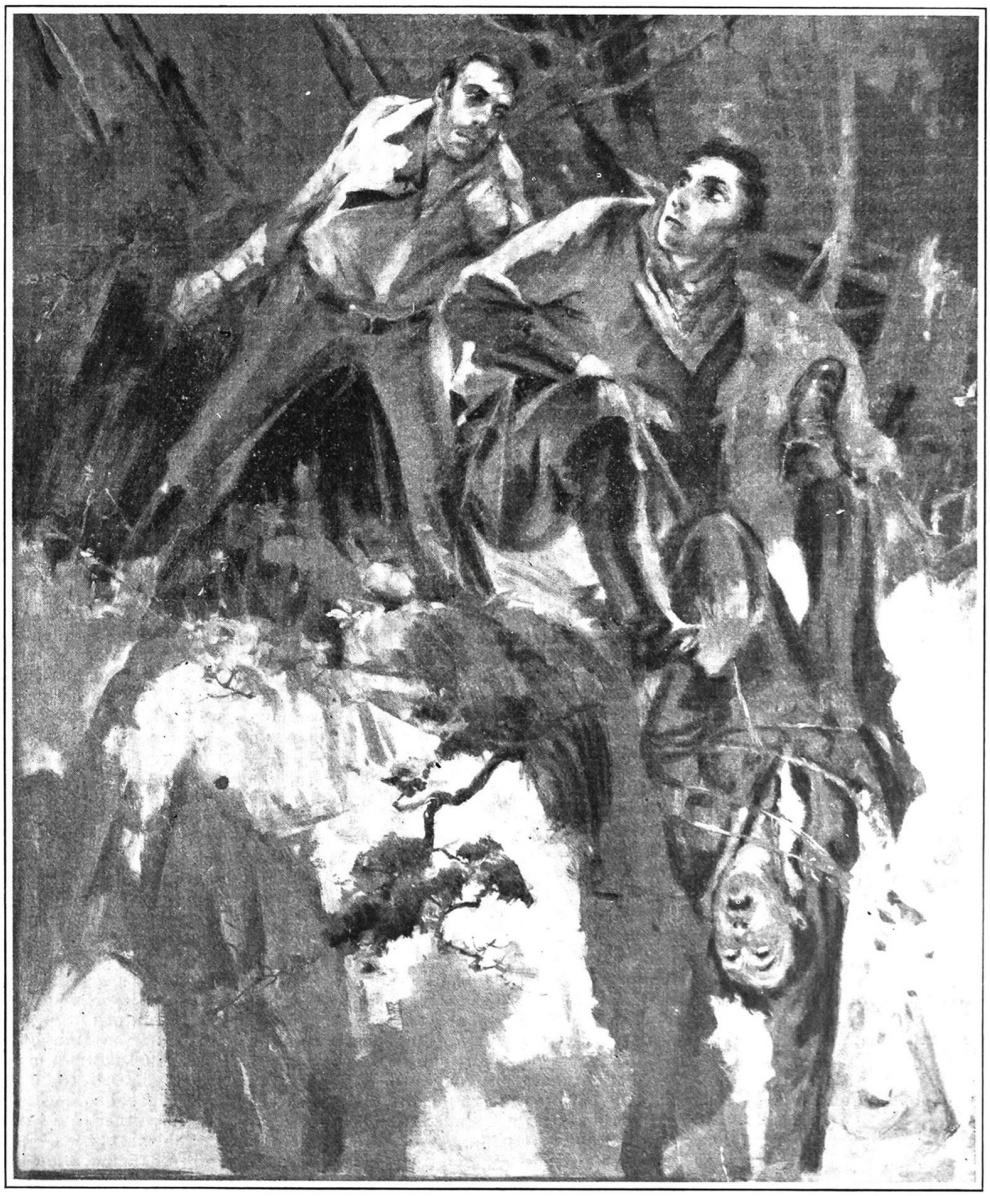
"Which way you ridin'?" Master asked.

"I'm heading north—up Columbia Lake," Carney answered.

Slocan's eyes carried a message to Dick's: that Master, knowing Bulldog's reputation, would like to know whether the latter would be on the trail over which he was toting so much gold.

"'Cause if you're headin' for Fort Steele, an' wasn't pullin' out just for a bit, I' goin' that way soon 's I've grubbed," Master said casually.

"Bulldog 'd make a good side-kick s'pose some rustler



Carney had looped the lariat through his gun-belt, and now the line was pulling him toward the cliff over which Snaky hung, head downward.

made a play for your pouch," Slocan said; then he laughed.

"Who'd be fool enough to try that?"

"Oh, Chinks or some *drifter*," and Master, looking into Slocan's eyes, was aware of a sinister wink of warning.

Carney caught this silent message, too, and read what was in the winker's mind.

"Slocan," he said, in a quiet, even, deadly tone, "you talk too much, and your talk, like yourself, is evil. Every thief is a drifter, but every drifter is not a thief. I'm a drifter, the only drifter present, and if that insinuation you've thrown out, backed by your gambler's wink is meant for me, if you'll step around that plank I'll straighten out some of the damn crookedness that's in you. Come around here, quick! Or, if you like, just lift your hand from beneath the bar where you've got it on a gun and I'll do the community a good service by putting you quiet."

The little clatter of voices was hushed, the bar was as quiescent as a somnolent pool lying out in the open at midnight.

Master tickled the grizzled lock above his ear with strong fingers, meditatively. Snaky Dick had thrust one hand beneath his khaki jacket, but the hand remained there inactive as if being warmed, for Carney's gray eyes that were now cold covered both him and Slocan.

"Bulldog," Slocan's voice carried an evident tremble, "you got me wrong."

"Turn your back, Slocan, lift your hands, then face about!" Carney commanded.

As if in good measurement Slocan, when he had rotated, put his hands on top of the bar.

"Now, then, John of Slocan," Carney said. "You'll apologize, of course, for you're a damn cur. You're the type that holds up from ambush an innocent man, you and your running mate there, Snaky Dick,. I fancy Mr. Master understands now.

Bulldog held out a hand to Master, adding, "I'm pullin out. Master."

When Carney had passed through the door, the Chinaman said: "John got you' bag of gold in his box, Mlister Mlaster. I go now catchee glub. Goo'-bye."

WHEN Hi Lo had gone, Slocan leaned across the bar and said: "Master, Carney's spiel doesn't ring good to me. If he'd won some claims in a little game he'd have lit a cigarette with the script. He ain't got no time for minin' or locatin' any place where he's solid set; he's a winger—the police knows that, here to-day and God knows where to-morrer."

"Well?" Master queried.

"If he'd been ridin' north, an' see that bag of gold the Chink lugged in, an' knowed it was bein' toted out by one man—ain't that a ace in the hole for Bulldog?"

"And if Bulldog calls me down I hand over the gold, eh?" Master sneered.

"You wouldn't, an' that's wuss. When you get a sleight-of-hand that can pick an ace from the bottom, then you'd have a chance with Bulldog. There ain't nobody can draw 's quick 's that cuss, an' you wouldn't even have a chanct to draw— he's got more tricks than a wolverine."

"Bunk!—what's the idea?"

"Just double on Bulldog. Dick, here'll trail him an' see if he back-tracks in a loop to the Fort Steele Trail. Then Dick can let us know, an' we'll just' double-cross Carney."

"I've rode this trail every month for two years and I ain't needed help," Master declared grimly. "And if you're partial to Dick, you're takin' a big chance of gettin' your feelin's harrered some if Carney catches him trailin' him."

Snaky laughed scornfully, "Me, afoot, an' Bulldog get a glint—no chanct! I'd only pickup the trail of his horse, that's all I want."

"Guess I'll put my horse into your stable for a munch of oats, and grub myself," Master said, as if their precautions did not interest him.

When Master had gone Slocan crooked a beckoning finger, and Snaky Dick pressed close against the bar.

"I was tryin' to get Master all set for Carney, Dick," Slocan said.

"My idee is, John," Snaky sneered, "that you talk too damn much. Get Master on edge, an' he's goin' to draw fust an' ast who he's plugged after."

"I'm gettin' an alibi for you, Dick, 'cause most anybody 'd say it was Bulldog if Master is held up."

Snaky looked at Slocan disgust on his vicious face. "If I'm caught with the goods what's an alibi wuth. An' if I make my get-away, I don't need it."

"You ain't comin' back from trailin' Bulldog?" Slocan queried.

"I ain't; an' I ain't trailin' him far, 'cause I ain't got time. With that cuss hoverin' I got t' fix things an' get out soon."

"Yes. Master'll pull out in an hour. How'll you cross the Kootenay River, Dick?"

"Same's I come up. I got a canoe cached below the old ford, an' I'll drift down to the landin' at night 'stead of crossin' to the trail. If I get me a hawse when I've sprung this—" there was an absolute grin of demoniac humor on Snaky's thin lips—"I'll put a bullet in his nut in some gully when I come to the Kootenay, an' they won't find him for weeks."

"Listen, Snaky," and Slocan's eyes were fixed on the small shifty blobs of black in Snaky's face. "You leave my share with my brother Jim; I'll be driftin' out tomorrer, an' if you don't do same 's I say—"

"You cut that out, John," Snaky snarled; "threats don't go with me; when I throw a pal down, I'd figger I'd got me a hoodoo."

"I didn't mean you would, Snaky; ain't I trustin' you. An' if you get pinched an' don't give me away, I'll work to get you off."

"It wouldn't do me no good to snitch on you, Slocan, an' you know it—you've took care they ain't got nothin' on you. I take all the chances, an' you split fifty-fifty. There's jus' one thing, John, if I find Bulldog 's doubled back, and ain't cached clost to Wild Hawse, but 's down the trail, I ain't goin' to pull this off, 'cause I couldn't get away with it. If I keep afoot I may slip by Bulldog, but I couldn't in a thousan' years with the other fellers hawse."

CARNEY rode north out of Wild Horse, perfectly satisfied that Snaky Dick would trail him; almost intuition this, fine attunement of mind to conditions. He was leaving a legible scrawl for Snaky, edging the buckskin here and there over imprintable patches of earth, it was like the record of a man going without thought of deceit.

Carney was convinced that Dick would take to flight—he had read in the shifty eyes that Snaky was scared through and through.

There were strong reasons why Carney had not seized upon his quarry at the Free Gold. In the first place, Bulldog had no authority to arrest Snaky Dick—the latter had not even been named in the proclamation of reward; to pounce upon him in the Free Gold would have meant a battle to the death, for Snaky was of the same mental moral development as the slum gunmen of the cities; and John of Slocan undoubtedly would have plumped a bullet into Carney's back.

But even this was not the main reason for the present subtle strategy; Snaky, dead, would be a poor witness to convict himself of the train robbery; he would carry nothing on his person as evidence; his low cunning, his experience in crime, would cause him to hide whatever loot he had brought away from the robbery. But fleeing over the trail from the dreaded Bulldog he would have on his person the valuable securities that had been stolen.

Unconsciously Carney fingered the slim lariat hung from the horn of his saddle; that was the plan. And Snaky, turned over to Major Steele with nothing but his lean mentality as defence, would weaken.

The trail started to drag its sinuous length up and across the roof of a rock formation guiltless of arboreal growth. Carney drew the buckskin to a stand, slid to the trail, and climbed to a rock abutment, over the flat top of which he had a good view of the trail that crept down into the valley beyond like a chocolate-colored ribbon, sometimes like a green sash, sometimes pink with sand. There was no evidence yet of Snaky, but Carney waited.

Suddenly he saw Snaky slip furtively from a growth of bushes, half-a-mile back, and, with body bent, read what was written on the trail; then he darted back to his bush cover, like a predatory rat.

Carney clattered down the rock uplift, mounted, and rode leisurely straight ahead up the mountain trail. "We're on exhibit, Pat," he said, as he toyed with the lock of hair on the buckskin's wither; "a dear friend is wishing us God-speed."

Where the trail took a sharp turn around a projecting slice of rock, Carney again dismounted for an observation. He chuckled presently, for far below he saw Snaky Dick swinging along with the shuffling dog-trot of an Indian back-tracking to Wild Horse.

Now Carney's leisure departed. As soon as Snaky's form had disappeared from view Bulldog pulled the buckskin from the trail, and taking to the bed of an almost dry stream retraced his way down the mountain.

A mile from White Horse he came to a valley that forked off to the southwest, and turning from the trail, he followed this in a detour that he knew would swing him back to the Fort Steele Trail some miles beyond Wild Horse. His object was to cache out where the Cranbrook Trail forked from the road to Fort Steele. If Snaky Dick were pulling out he would almost certainly branch off there and head down toward the ferry; if he did not, but continued on to Fort Steele, meaning to cross the bridge in the dark, Carney would trail him, and get police assistance at the fort to pounce on him.

So, somewhat ruthlessly, Bulldog pushed the buckskin across tumbled shattered rocks, sometimes through the spreading limbs of a half-rotted fallen tree; plunging half-a-dozen times through a broiling boulder-bedded stream, and the gallant little thoroughbred took it all with eager good fellowship, and where there was a stretch of grassland breaking into a swinging lope.

And Carney was pulling toward the southwest; he must be near the Fort Steele Trail.

Slipping down a cut-bank of red marl, the buckskin almost on his haunches, Carney saw that he was thrust into an open avenue.

A memory stirred Carney's mind. In the morning he had seen a disused trail like this forking from the Cranbrook way of going, had thought it just a path leading up to the placer gorges. This must be that same trail, and the general direction of it indicated that it was an abandoned section of the Cranbrook Trail, abandoned because of these very vicissitudes of fallen rock and tree and raging stream.

He slipped from the buckskin's back and leading the horse, trained his eye on the ground, a flitting thought in his mind that, if either Slocan or Snaky Dick knew of this branch of the Cranbrook Trail, Snaky would follow it to escape observation.

Within fifty yards the suspicion ceased to fit in his mind and became a certainty; there, in a reach of sand that followed the receding curve of the stream, were fresh hoof-prints heading south; they were wide well-formed prints, felt by hoofs that grew on big horses, a horse like the one Master had fastened to the tie-rail of the Free Gold.

No casual Indian or prospector riding a cayuse had passed to leave those wide-saucer-like impressions. A Mounted Police horse would have left a trail like that, but police horses were kept well shod, the iron on their hoofs as carefully looked after as the brass buttons on a service coat. And these hoof-prints left in the hardening sand, and in the clay where they ascended again to the bank, showed plainly that the shoes had been worn threadbare, the calks almost obliterated by wear. Even half a shoe was gone from one forefoot, perhaps wrenched off from the loosened nails by a catch in the rock. Beyond a doubt these tracks, so new the disturbed clay glistened moist in its late fracture, had been left by someone who had passed that afternoon riding Master's horse. And Master would have taken the proper trail and not this disjointed path.

SUDDENLY a ghastly illumination flashed across Carney's soul; the sinister harping of Slocan on the subject of a hold-up of Master rang in his ears, the fiendish undercurrent of insinuation levelled at Carney; the seething up of the criminality that was in the black heart of Slocan. He and Snaky Dick had had this all planned out. Snaky Dick, a potential slayer, would have every sentiment of decency, even of safety wiped out by the lure of that bag of gold; Slocan had always used a pawn in his crime exploits, and Snaky would be a willing tool.

"My God!" Bulldog muttered, "why didn't I think of that?" Engrossed with his own endeavor, Carney's mind, intensified, had not been susceptible to the finer lines of impressions.

Galvanized by this new, dreadful thought, Carney pushed on over the broken way to the south. Presently he came to where this disjointed path he followed forked into the Cranbrook Trail. He slid to the ground to dip into a confusing mystery, for the wide saucer hoofs had not cut at the trail toward Cranbrook, but had turned short back towards the Fort Steele Trail.

This was a poser. Why would Snaky Dick, if he rode the horse and were fleeing out, head toward the road to Fort Steele with its nest of Mounted at the bridgehead? It looked more as if Master, for some unaccountable reason, had come down and now rode back again.

At any rate, speed and action might solve the riddle: but caution in the extreme if ahead were the vicious Snaky with his animal cunning.

So the buckskin was pushed on, never at a thudding gallop that might carry to listening ears, just the shuffling cayuse-pace where the path was earthed, and a fast walk where, ahead, appeared possibility of ambush.

A couple of miles; and as Carney rose out of a draw, clothed with a stunted growth, Pat cocked his thin, tapering ears held his head up, and hesitated in his step as if, beyond, were something of interest.

Carney checked the horse, and standing up in his stirrups saw, a hundred yards ahead, a jutting rock point that thrust the trail quite to the edge of a cliff that overhung a torrent. And on the rock floor of the trail stood a horse, his head and forequarters hidden by the projecting point of rock,.

Carney patted the buckskin's neck affectionately. "Good boy, Pat! you're some little old pointer!" he muttered, speaking low; "and never a whinny."

Then he dismounted, dropped the rein over Pat's head, and took from the horn of his saddle his lariat. He inspected the running noose, chuckling as he muttered to the buckskin: "A man alive is worth half-a-dozen dead men if you want to find out something, Pat."

If he could noose Snaky—he couldn't expect to capture him any other way without gun-play, because if Snaky had killed Master he would take any chance to get away from a hanging, and Carney wanted him alive.

Avoiding the trail, Carney crept cautiously up the sloping, grassed bank that fell away from the rock cliffs, and stood, a gun in his left hand and the lariat

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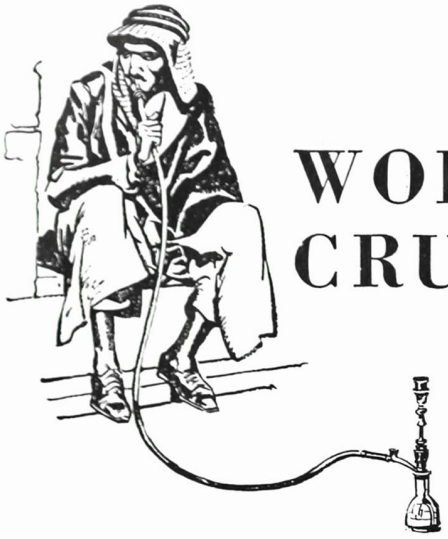

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found everywhere in the vicinity of the worker.

There is an almost uncanny effect of malleability in the fab.ication of this furniture—the heavy, solid wood almost seems to have been woven into curves and interlacings of design.

Although its chief setting has been Jasper Park, where it has been made a sort of feature of the place, and where it was first generally introduced and developed, yet interest in its unusual qualifications for garden and cottage use is drawing it across Canada from coast to coast. It seems to have found particular popularity in summer-house construction outside of its native heath, and the craftsman who has evolved this domestic creation out of nature's freakish handiwork, is now called upon for examples of his craft the Dominion over.

CANADIANS have always been rather proud of their hunting lodge effects in summer homes near the lakes or in the woods, and truly enough, the unbarked timber used as woodwork in the informal summer interior, is attractive, With heavily-barked woods, however, the heat of indoors will usually cause the bark to lift and crumble, making it a cleaning problem and a nuisance in constantly catching on clothing.

Unbarked birch, however, being lighter and smoother, makes a most attractive interior trim. An accompanying photograph shows a stair rail used by Merrill Dennison at Bon Echo. Mr. Dennison has made a study of the building of log cabins and rustic structures, and has found birch eminently satisfactory for use wherever unfinished wood can be fitted into the general decorative scheme.

Bulldog Carney's Remuda

Continued from page 12

in his right, close to the arched wall.

A snarling oath, a blasphemous epithet applied to somebody in the vicious voice of Snaky Dick, carried to his ears. The somebody, it transpired, was Slocan, and Carney gathered that Snaky had John at his mercy.

Carney edged a little closer to the theatre of action, hoping that Snaky, always as restless as a caged leopard, would step into line for a throw of the noose.

"Didn't I tell you, Slocan," Snaky snarled, "that a man that 'd double-cross a pal had a killin' comin' to him. Well, you've got it comin', you—" The rest of the sentence was more of a dissection of Slocan's moral fibre.

"And you lose out; you was hittin' the trail tomorrer, you told me, but I knowed you was lyin'; you was gettin' out cause you was double-crossin' me! Now, here is what's comin to you!"

Carney could not hear Slocan's part of the conversation; it was the high-pitched tone of Snaky's voice that carried to his ear.

"You said back at Wild Horse you'd make an alibi for me if I got caught. Well, you're goin' to make it, an' I'll tell you how. My hawse 's gone lame—he bust a shoe that 's split his frog among 'em damn rocks—an' I'm goin' to take yourn. You're willin' I'll take him, eh? Thanks for nothin', Slocan; but you're goin' to cough up that little alibi; that's for double-crossin' me, see, I'm goin' to kill you—it's comin' to you; an' I'm goin' to leave Master's hawse with you here, his bridle-rein tangled in your arm. When the——Mounted find you they'll know you got shot up in the fight with Master an' bled to death tryin' to ride out. Ain't that a good alibi, Slocan? I got to pull out, too. Here, you back up agin that wall while I drill you, cause I want it to look 's if it wasn't suddent—not through the heart, get me?"

Suddenly there was a wild screaming oath from Snaky, the crunching, stamping of feet on the rock trail, the crashing bark of a gun, and the two men, Snaky and Slocan, pushed into view, Slocan's hands clutching the shirt at Snaky's throat, and his big bulk slowly pushing the slighter man to the cliff edge.

Like the swish of a snake's coil, at a sweep from Carney's hand, the looped lariat cut through the air, and the smooth running noose slid over Snaky Dick's head, curiously catching in its circle an uplifted arm, the hand of which held a gun that clattered to the rock floor at the pull of Carney's muscular arm, and Snaky pitched to earth, Slocan anchored by his death clutch, tumbling over him.

Hand over hand on the line Carney ran in, and placing a heavy foot in the pit of Snaky's stomach to hold him steady, prepared to run winding circles of the lariat about the snared one.

Slocan staggered to his feet, his alcoholic brain roused to ferocity by the battle for his life, and, curiously, he took Bulldog's intrusion as a calamity, a dangerous thing, for Bulldog would take him to Fort Steele. He had all but had Snaky over the precipice—would have had him over in five seconds but for Bulldog, then he would have been free.

A murderous thought that he could drop the two of them over the cliff to be dashed to death on the rocks beneath motivated him.

He threw his bulk on Carney who had his own troubles holding the squirming, snarling Snaky while he hog-tied him. Bulldog was sent sprawling, his head scarce a foot away from the rock rim of the precipice. The lariat loosening, Snaky struggling in its coils, scrambled to his feet, by the merest chance his body coming between Slocan and Bulldog.

Carney was up, just saved by this chance happening, and in a second the three men were like three drunken sailors clasped in each other's arms reeling, and twisting, and thrusting, and panting, half-smothered oaths issuing from Snaky Dick's lips, by intuition the edge of the cliff the goal, physical punishment a minor thing; death beckoned from the rocky edge of the trail.

One clean hard drive of Carney's fist into Slocan's bloated face meant but just a trifling something in the death struggle. A kick that all but shattered Snaky's shinbone helped some, just some.

Carney would have used his gun on Slocan, but he had laid it down while he essayed to truss up Snaky. It was man to man—perhaps a shade of two to one against Carney; though each battled to put the other two over the edge of eternity.

But Carney, who physically lived as clean as a bull moose, was abnormal in his strength, in his cool, unflustered courage, in the steel tensity of his sinewed arms. Physically Dick was a weakling, and Slocan was soft, his bulk his only asset in a fight for life.

Snaky Dick, with animal cunning, slid a lean arm down and grasped Carney by an ankle; and at once the knee above that ankle came up with ramming force and caught Snaky in the stomach. He choked, he gasped, reeled backward, and clutching at Slocan, slid head and shoulders over the precipice.

Carney had looped the end of his lariat through his gun-belt when he had noosed Snaky, and now the line was pulling him toward the cliff; it would have taken him over but for the fact that it was around Slocan's body, and the latter's weight helped to sustain the dangling man.

"Here, Slocan, lay hold!" Carney panted, as he braced back.

But with an oath Slocan dashed at him to sweep him over the cliff.

As a schoolboy suddenly drops on all

fours to throw a pursuer, Carney crouched and Slocan, unwieldy, slow, incapable of a quick check, tripped, and shot over the precipice, carrying Snaky with him till the latter's head was just below the rim of rock.

Then Carney rested, braced, holding against the dragging weight. A quick loosening of the knotted line at his belt and he would be free, and Snaky would be a crushed pulp beside the smashed Slocan. But it was said of Carney that he never gave up, and he needed Snaky Dick alive.

The terrific strain on the lariat had eased somewhat; the man overboard must have found some support—a foothold on a jutting rock, or a handclasp on a tree root or bush. The line, perhaps, would have cut off at the edge of the precipice but for a holding growth, a rim of sod and scrub.

Carney felt that he could hold the weight now, but he wanted Snaky there on the surface, he needed him, and he doubted that he had strength enough to pull the dangling one up. He almost chuckled as he thought of something; and gave a shrill whistle—the well-known, signal to Pat that he was wanted—his call.

The buckskin came eagerly around the turn and up to his master, poking his fawn-colored muzzle into Bulldog's face.

Carney wound his right arm into the lariat like a corkscrew, gripping it with his right hand, always braced backward; then with his left he loosened the lariat from his belt and knotted it to the horn of his saddle.

"Back, me boy! and hold 'em!" he commanded. "Back!"

The buckskin, trained to throw his weight almost to his haunches to stop a steer, stepped back, back, till the line was taut and firm.

"Hold it, Pat!" Carney commanded, as he worked down along the lariat to the edge of the cliff. Then he called: "Keep yourself clear, Snaky; I'm hauling you up!"

Hand over hand, Carney eased the lariat over the cliff edge, and Pat, sensing his part, backed and backed, and soon the ugly, blanched face of Snaky showed above the precipice; then his shoulders; and the strong hands of Carney pulled him clear, and slammed him none too gently on his back.

"If you move while I'm trussing you up, Snaky," he said, "I'll toss you over!"

Indeed there was little resistance left in Dick. But for the arm that had been caught in the noose pulling it down beneath his shoulder, he would have been most effectually hanged, strangled.

Now Carney had Snaky's wrists bound behind his back with the lariat. He kicked over the cliff Snaky's gun that lay where it had fallen on the road.

Snaky tried to sneer—to grin: "That's right, Bulldog," he snarled; "you saved my life, so it's comin' to me to give you the straight goods—if I get a chance, you're it."

"Don't worry over any gratitude Snaky. I need you alive or I'd have let you drop like that other bundle of slime that went over."

"I got to hand you thanks for that part of it, Bulldog—that swine tried to double-cross me."

"How?"

But Snaky told his saviour to go where it is very hot indeed and find out.

Carney chuckled. "You seem peeved, Snaky. Sit down till I hobble you while I find Master's horse."

Master's big bay was just around the rock point in a bunch of cedars.

When Carney had led the horse back he said: "Now we'll solve that question of the double-cross; I've an idea."

He untied the bag of gold that was in the saddle pocket and dipped out a handful of the metal. He held it out for Snaky's inspection and laughed; "Bismuth, eh? Slocan palmed this bag off on Master, and you shot up Master, found this worthless stuff, and lay for Slocan?"

"And the damn swine got his—he's mashed to a jelly down there."

"Now for the gold. Here it is, Snaky," Carney declared as he unbuckled a brown canvas roll that was strapped across the saddle of the horse Slocan had ridden, and lifted out a bag similar to the one that now held the bismuth. "Yes, it's gold." Then he put it back and transferred the roll to the buckskin's back.

"Slocan switched the bags in his iron box," Snaky snarled; then he cursed long and vehemently, winding up with a jubilation over the fate of the one who had double-crossed him.

"Well, that's that," Carney declared —"now for this."

He ran his slim strong hands over Snaky's body, and presently, with a jerk, turned the latter's shirt over his head, discovering a packet of papers, wrapped in oiled silk, and stitched to the undershirt. He shoved the shirt back under Snaky's waist-band saying cryptically: "For Major Steele's inspection. I take it that those are the securities and bills you looted from the express when you held up the train."

Untying Snaky's ankles he ordered: "Climb into the saddle on Master's horse. We've got to get into Fort Steele and get a patrol out on the chance that Master is still alive—for you shot him up, of course. Did you kill him?"

But Snaky snarled; "Go to hell! I wish I had the drop on you!"

Carney ran his lariat from the bridle of Master's horse to the horn of his own saddle, commanding: "Move on in front —any tricks and I'll whiz a bullet through you."

Carney knew that the other horse would follow.

Now Master wasn't killed. Some Chinamen found him lying cached in a clump of cedars, badly wounded, and brought him in to Fort Steele, where he recovered.

So Snaky Dick wasn't hanged, but got twenty years at Stony Mountain.

When the twenty years are up he will be extradited to the United States to stand trial for the train robbery, and Carney will then get the five thousand reward, for the proclamation had read: "For the arrest and conviction of the train robber."

Fate is darn funny.

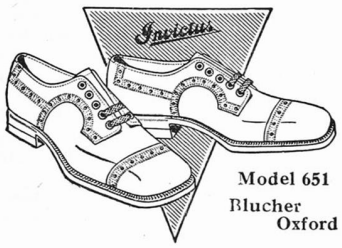
The Odd Page

Continued from page 12

"My dear friend,

We are sorry to tell you that George died on Saturday very suddenly———"

The story would be incomplete, however, if I did not mention that not until the year 1917 did I visit Canada, when I travelled from Halifax, west across that vast country, in a railway carriage exactly like the one in my dream (though I had never before seen a Pullman car), through a scene identical with the viaduct of my dream. Who can say how these things may be?—Mrs. Katherine M. Stuart, 35 Carlton Road, East Sheen S.W. 14, London, Eng.



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